REFLECTIONS

UPON

Monsieur Des Cartes's

DISCOURSE

OF A

Method for the well-guiding of Reason, and Discovery of *Truth* in the Sciences.

Written by a private Pen in French, and Translated out of the Original Manuscript, By *J. D.*

LONDON,

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REFLECTIONS

UPON

Monſieur Des Cartes's

DISCOURSE

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TO THE

Right Honorable,

BULSTRODE WHITLOCK,

One of the Lords Commissioners for the Great Seal of England, &c.

MY LORD,

HAd I been so fortunate as to have brought your *Lordship* somwhat equal unto you, that is to say, great, excellent, and worthy the eyes

of all *Europe*, I ſhould not have need to begin this addreſs with a prayer for pardon; which now I muſt needs do, ſince, my Lord, I only beſeech you to be a tutelar Angel to a poor Orphan, whoſe Parents are unknown, and which is like to periſh, if not ſhelter'd by your Lordſhips ſhadow.

Thoſe who have had the honour to converſe with your Lordſhip, very well know how much, among your other vertues, your Candor and humanity are conſpicuous, and what Goodneſs and Tenderneſs reſides in that high and noble Soul of yours, which makes you ſo univerſal a Patron to all liberal Studies, and a Foſterer

of every thing vertuous, animating and quickening the inferior Bodies with that great Light which continually dwels in your own Sun.

And, my Lord, more particularly, since I fear you have that admirable defect of forgetting the favors you confer, give me leave to put your *Lordship* in mind of what you have done to me, both in doing me the honour to think I might be somewhat serviceable to you, as also in encouraging my poor studies; which having received warmth and life from your protection, bring this poor offering as the first fruits, which I beseech your Lordship to accept with the same easiness as that

great Prince did the hand-full of water, ſince it is the heart that proportions and eſtimates every gift. In the mean while, my Lord, I ſhall not ceaſe, by my prayers and actions, to make appeare that high reverence that I carry towards you; and though I be the meaneſt among your innumerable Adorers, yet is there none more cordial, more fervent, more ſincere, then

My Lord,

Your moſt humble, moſt devoted, and moſt obedient Servant,

Jo. Davies.

THE PUBLISHER TO THE Impartial READER.

IF a man ſhould look on all *Books*, ſince there were any, he ſhall finde that few Authors have been ſo fortunate in their Writings, but they have left ſomewhat for thoſe that ſhould come after them to except againſt; and ſo conſequently few have been tranſmitted to Poſterity, without the caſtigations and cenſorious remarks of other men; and theſe not proceeding from envious emulation, but from ſober and ſerious *enquiry* after *Truth*. But if any have been thought ſo tranſcendent, as to have been able to eſcape theſe, yet whether Poſterity have not been abus'd by a ſervility of imitation of them, or precipitate ſuperſtruction on them, is much to be queſtion'd. However it be, all theſe kinde of Labors have

have ever been encourag'd and rewarded as such, as have both as to Religion and Policy not meanly oblig'd Mankinde: Nor indeed can we look on those that decry such endeavors, but as such as seek Fig-leaves to cover some secret Errors, or are too fondly enamor'd of their own opinions. *Truth*, as it is a *Mettal* that cannot be counterfeited, so doth it not *decline*, but *endure* the severest test, and reckons its triumphs by its tryals, which do not consume, but refine it. *Nature* certainly is not grown old to feebleness and sterility; or if it produce now as great ingenuities as it hath formerly, can it possibly be, that she will not finde employment for them? otherwise a *Traditional* acquiescence were as commendable as all the *Disquisitional* recherches after *Truth*.

What excellent discoveries are there daily found out, even in things wherin our ordinary subsistence is concern'd, which yet we are not content onely to embrace, but endeavor to improve

improve and advance? And why may not the ſame thing happen alſo in *Philoſophy*, which is of that extent, that ſhe is not limited but by the univerſe? It is indeed our weakneſs and our unhappineſs together, to attribute to ſome men that *Authority* over our *Reaſon*, which our Paſſions are not able to recal; nor are we eaſily reduced to hearken to others, who ſhall tell us truer things, though different from what we knew before.

But how little do we herein conſider how often *Error* and *Humanity* may lodge in the ſame Inn; whereas *Infallibility* is a thing, that, in this World, hath not what the Foxes, nor the Fowls of the Air have, neither hole nor neſt. It is a Negative *Attribute* of the *Divine Majeſty*, one of the *Regalia* of *Omnipotency*, which it is *Treaſon* in any thing that is *Humane* to aſſume. *Religion* it ſelf, which of all things hath the greateſt participation of, and correſpondence with the *Divine Being*, is hardly allow'd *Infal-*

lible, when we look on it with relation to the Humane diſpenſation thereof. *Hereſies*, *Schiſms*, *Errors*, *&c.* are not certainly the Motes that render that great *Beauty* the fairer; but the *Black Patches*, the *Imperfections*, and the acknowledgment of our *Humanity*, and the then conſequent preſumption of our *Error*. Now if this happen in that affair, wherein our precious and immortal Souls are embark'd; what may we expect in things which have onely an alliance and conjunction with our external happineſs?

But as it happens in *Religion*, that the moſt eminent *Hereticks* have been men of excellent Learning and Endowments; ſo it muſt be ſuppoſed, that thoſe onely can be *Hereticks* in *Philoſophy*, who are indeed great *Philoſophers*, and ſuch as imagined in themſelves, that they had ſomething to acquaint the World that ſhould aſtoniſh it more then any thing it knew before. But he that undertakes ſuch a thing, ought to conclude with himſelf,

ſelf, that he intends to quarrel with the common opinion, and therefore ought to preſuppoſe whatſoever may make good the ground of the received *Tenets*, which muſt be taken away to facilitate the charge of a new, and, before, unheard of Aſſertion. It is no eaſie matter for one man to foreſee what a many may be able to object; and yet this was the caſe of the great Author of the DISCOURSE *concerning the conduct of our Reaſon*, &c. the truly great DES CARTES, the prodigy of his Age, and whoſe departure hence ſo ſoon is yet the regret of the *Philoſophical World*. But being withal but a *Man*, it were an injury to the *Divinity* to think him *inerrable*; we may well place him among the *Heroes*, but not among the *Gods*. Nor ought any man to think it a thing any ways injurious to him, to reflect on what he hath done, ſince it is a thing he is ſo far from declining, that it is his invitation, as who thought that Learning gained no ſmall advantages

ages by communication and correſpondence, and hath obliged the world with his Labors, with this Caution, that others by their experiments might advance his diſcoveries. Some there have been, who have wreſtled the World out of ſome tenet of *Publick Faith*, who yet in ſome other things, have that weakneſs which is the moſt adequate attribute of mankinde; and that it hath far'd thus with our great Author, may partly appear by theſe REFLECTIONS on his DISCOURSE. I am in ſome doubt, whether he might have ſeen them before he died, much more, before the publiſhing of his Diſcourſe, (it being his cuſtom to communicate all things to be ſtrictly examined by his Friends and Correſpondents, before he committed them to the Preſs) for however he might haply think them ſlight, yet certainly we ſhould ſomewhere have met with his reſentment. As for the Author of theſe *Reflections*, I cannot do him ſo much

honor

honor as tell the World his name, for I never knew it, having met with them accidentally in a *Manuſcript*. If I have done him right (as I believe) in the Tranſlation I have perform'd what I undertook. If any man will *reflect* upon theſe *Reflections*, he is at liberty, and will ſhew himſelf a *Philoſopher*, by engaging Ingenuities into thoſe Olympick exerciſes, where the prize is TRUTH.

J. D.

Errata.

ERRATA.

PAg. 19. l. 3. r. *Ancients*, p. 28. l. 2. r. *of those*, p. 38. l. 19. r. μετέπειτα, p. 45. l. 1. r. *which it*, p. 46. l. 23. r. *internal*, p. 53. l. 15. r. *depend*, p. 59. l. ult. r. *conceive*, p. 74. l. 20. r. *I*.

 John Verneij 1679

REFLECTIONS UPON Monſieur DES CARTES's Diſcourſe of a *Method for the well-guiding of Reaſon, and the Diſcovery of Truth in the Sciences, &c.*

WHenever I have to deal with any work of Monſieur *Des Cartes*, I rowſe my ſelf up to all the attention and vigilance poſſib'e: And this I do, not only out of the juſtice which obliges a man to uſe the niceſt ſcrutiny and ponderation of *Reaſon*, where nothing can be obtained but by the irrefragable conviction thereof; but alſo, to examine how deſervedly this man is plac'd in that extraordinary eſteem wherein we find him in the world, even amongſt

the greateſt men ; which is as much as to ſay, whether Fame be not in great part out of his debt. As for his *Dioptriques* and his *Geometry*, I can paſs no other cenſure upon them, then what *Socrates* paſs'd on a Book of *Heraclitus* in theſe words ; ἃ μὲν συνῆκα γενναῖα ὅμοια δὲ ἃ μὴ συνῆκα. πλὴν δηλίου τινὸς κολυμβήτου δεῖται. But for his doctrine of the *Nature* of *Light*, which he inſerts in his *Dioptriques*, and the *Hypotheſes* he hath at the beginning of his *Meteors*, he muſt pardon me, if in ſtead of calling them γενναῖα, I name them ξένα καὶ παράδοξα. And ſeeing he proſtitutes them in their nakedneſs, without the leaſt ſhadow of proof, he is unjuſt according to his own rule : For how can he expect I ſhould receive them as true, when he hath tyed me to this general rule, *viz.* Never *to admit any thing into perſwaſion, but by the ſufficient evidence of Reaſon* ? And though he have made a handſom ſuperſtructure of doctrine upon them, (as may, and ought to be acknowledged)

ledged) yet have they no dependance on thoſe principles, nor is any thing that is ſaid advanc'd out of any deſign to prove them. But I ſhall not at the preſent give you my particular opinion of them, but ſhall content my ſelf to ſend you certain *REFLECTIONS* on the ſame Authors *DISCOURSE* of a *Method*, as he calls it, *for the well-guiding and conduct of our* Reaſon, *in the diſcovery of truth in the* Sciences. The Piece, reſembling the great Author that brought it forth, muſt be noble and excellent; and if there be any thing deficient, it is the more excuſable, in regard he proteſteth that he hath only advanced it as a propoſition, which he expoſes to the battery of other mens judgments. And therefore whatever I ſhall ſay of it, ſhall carry that reverence as ſhall witneſs I have done no violence to that deſerved reſpect which the world beares him, and ſhall calmly give my judgment of it, which is that he himſelf deſires all men ſhould do, who any

ways conceive themſelves able to be contributors to the Commonwealth of Learning.

To the firſt Part.

THe firſt Part of his Diſcourſe may be reduced to theſe heads. That that which (according to the French word) is called *bon ſens*, that is to ſay, *Reaſon*, or *ſound judgment*, or (as the Engliſh Tranſlation of the ſaid Diſcourſe hath it) *Right underſtanding is naturally equally diſtributed among all men*, ſo that one man ought not to be called more rational or more underſtanding then another; yet with this reſtriction, That *all had not the ſame conduct of their reaſon; and that therefore it were neceſſary there were a certain Method contrived for the regulation and conduct thereof. That he had form'd to himſelf an Idea of ſuch a* Method, *as if there be any thing ſolidly good and of importance, it muſt be that; and by the aſſiſtance thereof his progreſs*

greſs in the Sciences hath been mightily advanced; That he hath been ſo liberal as to communicate this Method *unto us, that we might judg of it. That having ſtudied in the moſt famous Univerſities in* Europe, *and arrived to as great reputation of Learning as any of his Contemporaries whatſoever;* when yet he came ſeriouſly to caſt up his accounts, he found the *ſumma totalis* to amount to this, *that all the advantage he had made,* was, *That he had only more and more diſcover'd his own ignorance; That he had not found any thing in* Philoſophie (*though cultivated by the moſt excellent wits that have lived theſe many ages*) *which was certain and indiſputable,* nothing but doubt, ambiguity and ſophiſtry: And, *That in regard there were ſo many different opinions about the ſame thing, he thought himſelf ſufficiently diſobliged from any further proſecution of his ſtudies, and conſequently reſolved to ſeek no other knowledge but what he ſhould find in himſelf and the great volume of the world.*

It hath been ever generally obſerved, that thoſe men who either out of reſtleſneſs of humor, or contempt of what is paſt, have been moſt buſie and agitating in the introduction of any new doctrines or opinions, have ever obſerved this rule, to make their advances very gradual at the firſt, and to temper their propoſitions with ſo much plauſibility, as a doctrine which comes to quarrel with the common Tenent can bear, ſo for a while to ſupport the ſpirits of thoſe they have to deal with. But Monſieur *des Cartes*, to my great aſtoniſhment, begins his *Diſcourſe* with a *Paradox*, which not only cauſes the Reader to make a halt at the firſt ſtep, but is withall ſo ſlendenly proved, that I wonder it could proceed from one who admits nothing for current but what hath undergone the grandeſt of *Tryals*, and defies all perſwaſion which is not induc'd by irrefragability and demonſtration.

But that we ſhall here firſt examine, ſhall be theſe two Queſtions, which are

easily started out of the foregoing words.

1. *Whether Reason, sound judgment, or right understanding be equally distributed?*

2. Whether there be not some presumption in that assertion of his; *That there is nothing in Philosophy which is not doubtful?*

Since we must confess that all things that God hath made are good, we cannot without a quarrel with his providence doubt, but that *Reason* or *right understanding*, or as the Author cals it elsewhere, *The faculty of right judging and distinguishing truth from falshood*, is excellently well divided and distributed among men. This is one reason produc'd by the Author for the proof of the first question; but how strongly, we shall see anon: At present it shall suffice to say, that it doth not hence follow, that right understanding is *equally* distributed. The omnipotence of God may be as much or more acknowledg'd and admired in

the great inequality which there is of right underſtanding among men, as if it were equally weigh'd to everyone. And therefore this propoſition lies open to the battery of

1. The common opinion of all men.
2. Experience.
3. The Author himſelf.

Firſt, That it croſſes the common opinion, we need but conſider what we ſay of thoſe men whom we deſire to commend or prefer before others: we ſay they are *rational*, *knowing*, *underſtanding* men; or they are ſuch as can *judg* or *diſtinguiſh* ſo rightly of things, that they will not be eaſily ſurpriſed by miſrepreſentations. Now, if the right underſtanding were equal in all, this manner of ſpeaking were impertinent and ridiculous, and would ſignifie as much, as if being to commend a *Beauty*, we ſhould ſay that ſhe had two eyes, and that her noſe were in the midſt of her face.

2. That it ſtands not the charge of Experience, we are only to look on our ſelves

ſelves as men. Some have ſuch and ſuch endowments and excellencies, others have others: Some are of a quick and nimble ratiocination; others are ſo dull and flegmatick, that they ſeem not to reaſon at all; and theſe are they which *Ariſtotle* in his Politicks calls φύσει δούλοι, as if nature for want of ratiocination had deſigned them for ſlaves and ſubjects to others. There are others, that are more *diſcourſive* and *underſtanding* by the ſimple liberality of *Nature*, then ſome others, who with all the aſſiſtance and advantages of *Books*, *Study*, *Precepts*, &c. can hardly arrive to mediocrity.

3. The Author in this very point is as unfortunate as other men that maintain Paradoxes; that is, when they have rack'd their wits and inventions to make good a Paradox, they in treating of ſome other queſtion inſenſibly contradict their former Hypotheſis. For in another place of this diſcourſe he ſayes, * That *Philoſophy*

* Pag. 9. according to the Engliſh Tranſlation, printed 1649.

affords

us the means to speak of all things with probability, and makes herself to be admired by the least knowing men. Here while he is wrapt into the exaltations of those reasonings which *a man of right understanding* may naturally arrive to, he presupposes that all have not that right understanding. Besides he also allowes that mens knowledge or right understanding may admit of *comparison* (which utterly destroyes *equality*) and according as it is *more* or *less* in men, accordingly do they more or less admire Philosophy. In another (*pag.* 11.) he says, *That those who have the strongest reasoning faculties, and who best digest their thoughts to render them more cleer & intelligible, are more fit to perswade then great Masters of Rhetorick.* Here he admits & applauds the *strength* of reasoning faculties, which he certainly would not, did he not suppose there were some *weaker* reasoning faculties; and this I think makes against the equality of Right understanding. Nor doth he only

only commend the ſubtle ratiocinations which a man of right underſtanding, or a right judging man may have, but elſwhere, viz. *pag.* 25. he confeſſes that *ſome have reaſon and modeſty enough to judge that they are leſs able to diſtinguiſh truth from falſhood then others, and that they ought much rather to follow others mens opinions then ſeek after better themſelves.* In another place he ſays, *Some men are ſtupid, dull and inſenſible.* If this does not evince a graduality of underſtanding in men, I know not what does; or elſe we muſt ſay that ſtupid and dull men are very good underſtanding, and very right judging men.

Now to prove this equal diſtribution of right underſtanding, the Author of the *Diſcourſe*, beſides what is above alleadged, inſiſts on two other reaſons. The firſt immediately follows his propoſition in theſe words: *For that every one believes himſelf ſo well ſtored with it, that even thoſe who in all other things ſeem the hardeſt to*

be

be pleas'd, ſeldom deſire more of it then they have. This reaſon to me ſeems to want many grains to make it weight; for a diſtribution may be very good and well done, though all are not content with their ſhares. But that which he ſubjoins, I much more wonder at, where he ſays, that *'tis not likely all men ſhould be deceiv'd in this*; but that this is the very thing *that witneſſes that the faculty of right judging and diſtinguiſhing truth from falſhood (which is properly called reaſon or underſtanding) is naturally equal in all men.* But to anſwer this, I deny that all men are ſo well contented with their portions of right underſtanding; nay it may be affirm'd that they would willingly have more if they could; nor want there thoſe, were the diviſion to be made again, who would be glad of more then they have, though they do not openly complain of their deficiencie at the preſent. Beſides, there are many that will not complain, only to avoid the contempt which may be con-

conſequential to the want of right underſtanding: As we ſee divers who are very ſenſible of their poverty and exigencies, and privately bewail their wants, who yet ſet the beſt face on it to the world, becauſe they will not be ſlighted and treated below themſelvs. 'Tis upon this account, that it is natural to women to wear black patches, and to hide their other deformities by all the artifice humane invention can furniſh them with.

The other reaſon which the Author makes uſe of, ſeems at firſt ſight to be more forcible to his purpoſe. For, *pag.*4. he ſays, That *Reaſon or right underſtanding is the only thing which makes us men, and diſtinguiſheth us from Beaſts*; and this he believes *to be entire in every man.* To which my anſwer peremptorily is this, That *right underſtanding* is not that which makes us men, as he affirms; for we may be men without it; and I believe no man will deny but that the ſtupid, the dull, nay the diſtracted are equally men with others. But

But to diſperſe thoſe clouds of imaginations which may darken this queſtion, we are to diſtinguiſh the cauſe and principle of this Rationation from the ſtate or condition wherein a man ought to be when he is to execute his functions. He that hath his eys bound about with a cloth, can make no uſe of them till the cloth be taken away: In like manner he that hath good legs is not in a condition to walk if he be fetter'd, unleſs you take away the fetters. The principle then of this ratiocination, which the Philoſophers call τὸ λογικὸν, is that which diſtinctively makes us men, and in that I do confeſs that all men are equal; but *right underſtanding* is not abſolutely that principle, but is the ſtate or condition wherein our underſtanding ought to be for to exerciſe its functions. Now for an interemptory concluſion to this point, I need ſay but this, That the ſtate or condition before mentioned, which is the conſtitutive and diſtinctive difference between man and beaſt

beaſt, hath no dependance on the underſtanding, but on the diſpoſition and temperament of the Body, whereof there being a great diverſity, it will follow, that the Author, to prove an equal diviſion of right underſtanding among men, ſhould have built it upon this Paradox, That the diſpoſition and temperament of all mens bodies is one and the ſame.

Before I break open the other queſtion, I ſhall beg the Authors favor to tell him, that though he had made it his deſign to bring Philoſophy into diſrepute as much as lay in his power, yet cannot he do it without commending it, and that more then he intended. For firſt of all, he confeſſes that by the aſſiſtance of it *He hath diſcovered his own ignorance*, that is to ſay, it hath been his *Collyrium* whereby he hath ſeen the difficulty which is in the acquiſition of the knowledge of things. But there are many degrees of Ignorance. For the preſent it ſhall ſuffice us to obſerve, that there is a kind of groſs

groſs beaſtly ignorance, which Philoſophy abhors; and another kind which in reſpect of this may be ſaid to be knowing, and ſuch as wherein Philoſophy many times leaves us. The firſt is in thoſe who are utterly ignorant of the ſtate of a Queſtion; the ſecond is in thoſe that know it well enough, but finding that many things may be brought both for, and againſt it, they are not convinc'd whether opinion to cleave to. As for example, to make a ſquare to a circle, would be thought by thoſe that are not acquainted with the *Mathematicks*, a very eaſie thing to do, and that a Carpenter or a Bricklayer would not ſtick at it; but a good Mathematician will tell you he cannot doe it, nay haply will queſtion whether it can be done at all.

Secondly, the Author confeſſes that *Philoſophy affords us the means to ſpeak of all things with probability*. If it do ſo, then certainly it hinders us from advancing propoſitions that are ridiculous or impertinent. To which I may

adde

adde this, that as in conſultation or deliberation, though we cannot be aſſured of the ſucceſs of what we deſign, we ought not to hold our arms acroſs, but put that in execution which ſeems moſt conformable to reaſon; ſo in the ſpeculative Sciences we muſt not always ſuffer our minds to be gravel'd in an indifferencie or *æquilibrium* as to all opinions like Scepticks, but embrace that which carries with it moſt probability.

But what ſhall we ſay of the procedure of the Author in this caſe? As ſoon as he had gone through the ordinary courſe of Philoſophy in the Schools, becauſe he found not the ſatisfaction he expected, he perſwades himſelf, that there is nothing in all *Philoſophy* which is not *diſputable*, and by conſequence not *doubtful*; and thereupon quits the reading of all books of Philoſophy, *reſolving to ſeek no other knowledge but what he could find in himſelf and the great volume of the world.* But is not this reſo-

lution a little too precipitate? I would gladly ask him, whether when he had finiſhed his courſe of Philoſophy, he had read all *Ariſtotles* works leiſurely, and with that attention of mind which were requiſite, and with the neceſſary helps for the underſtanding of them? When he had done this; whether he had conſulted *Alexander*, *Themiſtius*, *Simplicius*, *Philoponus*, and other *Greek* Philoſophers, for their opinions concerning what he thought of moſt importance, to ſee whether they agreed among themſelves, and with their great Maſter? I am confident he will not affirm that he had done all this at that time. Beſides that, I know theſe books are not ſo common among young Students, nay many times their Tutors and Profeſſors read them not but upon the reputation of others.

But let us put the caſe, that *Ariſtotle* and his diſciples ſhould never have done any thing but gull'd us, I doe not perceive how a man could thence infer that there is nothing certain

tain in all Philoſophy, before he had read *Plato's* works, were it only to ſee whether the Antiens had with juſt reaſon entitled him *divine:* but eſpecially before he had decipher'd his *Timæus*, to ſee if there were any thing more ſolid in that then in the works of *Ariſtotle* And when both *Ariſtotle* and *Plato* ſhould have been deceived, had it been amiſs, or was it not neceſſary to have ſifted the Philoſophy of *Epicurus*, as alſo that of the *Stoicks*, before the pronouncing of this ſevere ſentence againſt all Philoſophy? Not to mention, that it had not been any crime to have turn'd over the writings of *Hippocrates*, to ſee on what principiples of *Philoſophy* he had built his *Phyſicks*.

But to rip up the bottom of the queſtion: If the Author had contented himſelf to ſay that there were but few things in Philoſophy that were certain and indiſputable, he would have had that advantage of ground of me, that I durſt not have ſet upon him; but ſince

he flies so high as to declare absolutely and without any exception, that there is not any thing in all Philosophy which is not doubtful, I think there needs no great forces to encounter with him.

I shall say nothing of the certainty and clearness of the Demonstrations of *Geometry*, because he seems not to reckon it as any part of Philosophy; but as for *Logick*, he doth her the honor to make her one of the children, or at least the handmaid of Philosophy. When I seriously consider it, I cannot but wonder how he should, without any exception, say that there were nothing certain in Philosophy. For not to speak of the other parts of *Logick*, those very precepts which *Aristotle* gives us of *Opposition*, *Conversion*, and the *Transposition* of the three Figures of *Syllogisms*, and the manner how to reason in any of them, and of the *Reduction* of the Syllogisms of the second and third figures to the first, all which are as firm and *indispu-*

table

table as any *Demonſtrations* of *Geometry*, and ſo generally received, that no man hath hitherto call'd them into the leaſt queſtion: And to produce one concluſive proof hereof, let us ſee what the Author himſelf confeſſes *pag.* 28. of his Diſcourſe, where he ſays, *That Logick contains divers moſt true and good Precepts, and teaches us to ſpeak with judgment of the things we are ignorant of.*

To paſs from *Logick* to *Moral* Philoſophy, which foraſmuch as it may be treated of two manner of ways, the one *Parainetick*, the other *Dogmatick*, the former he honours with thoſe elogies and commendations it deſerves; but for the latter, he taxes it with a deficiencie as to the teaching of the vertues, and lays it to his charge, that many times it beſtows that fair name on what might more properly be termed Inſenſibility, Pride, Deſpair, or a Parricide. Wherein I confeſs I have no great quarrel with him, if we ſpeak of the moral Philoſophy of the *Stoicks*

which indeed ſometimes would make us too inſenſible, ſometimes equals us to God, nay in a manner prefers us before him. But as for *Ariſtotle*, in the writings he hath left us of this part of Philoſophy, he hath ſo excellently well deſcrib'd the Vertues and Vices, and hath been ſo fortunate in it, that there are very few things to be carp'd at in him, unleſs it be this one grand omiſſion, Not to have left any one word of mans duty towards God. As for his *Politicks*, it cannot be denied, but that the rules and maxims he gives are fallible, the nature of the thing being ſuch as will not admit infallibility: yet ſhall I not ſtick to ſay, that he that ſhall find nothing in them that ſatisfies him, is a man of a very odd ſtomach.

But it may be it is his *Phyſicks* that the *Author* particularly quarrels at. I muſt indeed confeſs that it is like a great Forreſt, where there are ſo many croſs paths, that it is no hard thing for a man to loſe his way in them.

Truth

Truth may be compar'd to thoſe birds which build their neſts on the tops of the higheſt rocks, ſuch as are almoſt inacceſſible by reaſon of their horrid precipices, and ſuch as it is very hard, if not impoſſible to climbe up to. Or if you will have it, ſuppoſe *Truth* ſcatter'd and loſt in a great Forreſt, it may be preſumed ſome Huntſmen may be ſo fortunate as to give her a ſtart; but in their chaſe of her they muſt expect to meet with buſhes and quickſets, which are ſo thick, that it is none of the eaſieſt things to make way through them. It is the pleaſure of God to keep Nature under a cloud undiſcovered, the more to oblige us to humility by a ſenſe and an acknowledgment of our ignorance. Yet all this ſuppos'd and granted, it is not to be thought that ſo many great and eminent perſonages, who made it their only buſineſs in their ſeveral ages to ſtudy and find out Nature, ſhould have taken all that pains to no purpoſe, and after all their purſuit to have diſcovered no-

thing at all. And it is on the other ſide an injurious and diſhonorable diſeſteem of reverend Antiquity, and an overweening opinion of our ſelves, to imagine that one of us now living, contracting all ſtudy into himſelf, and thence directing it to the great volume of the world, (which yet muſt be acknowledg'd to have been equally open at all times and in all ages) can without the leaſt external aſſiſtance or advantage doe more then all others, though furthered and advanced by mutual helps and endeavours. Nor ſhall I ſtick to ſay, that the faireſt ſtones of this our Authors new building, will be found to be ſuch as he ſhall have reſerved out of the rubbidge and ruines of *Ariſtotles* Phyſicks.

Nor is it hard to make this appear, if by a pattern we may judge of the whole peece. For let a man but read his explication of the Motion of the Heart, which we have in the fift Part of this Diſcourſe; There he would maintain the moving of the Heart to

proceed

proceed from the heat which is within it. Now this great point, which he conceives to be grounded upon the evidence of Reaſon, is borrowed from *Ariſtotle*. But that we may exempt ſo great and eminent a perſon from the indiſcretion of holding any thing which is inconvenient or incoherent, I am perſwaded that, however he may ſpeak of the Philoſophy taught in the *Schools*, as ſlightingly and diſadvantageouſly as may be, he intended to aſſume no more then I am willing to grant him.

But to come yet a little nearer, let it be granted that there is nothing but what is doubtful in Philoſophy, yet the Author proves this aſſertion but very weakly. *There is nothing*, ſays he, *in Philoſophy which is not diſputable*, therefore *nothing which is not doubtful*. Do we not know that there are many who endeavour to perſwade others to what they themſelves believe not? And there want not thoſe who will *diſpute* about what they nothing at all doubt

doubt of. To which I ſhall add thus much to make it overweight; That to ſay that *any thing is doubtful, becauſe ſome men doubt of it*, argues a not full underſtanding of the definition of *doubtful*. For as all that's admitted into the creed and approbation of ſome certain men, is not for that reaſon eſteemed probable, but only that which hath paſs'd the approbation and allowance of the moſt learned, or greateſt part of the wiſeſt and moſt knowing men, or at leaſt the moſt eminent among them.

To the ſecond Part.

THat which we ſhall think fit to epitomiſe out of the ſecond Part, amounts to thus much. *There is not*, ſayes he, *ſo much perfection in thoſe works whereto divers have contributed their helps and endeavors, as in thoſe wherein one particular man hath diſpoſed of all things: As may be obſerv'd in t oſe edifices which have their deſig-*

nations

nations and perfection from one particular Architect, as being commonly more regular and uniform then those wherein divers have endeavered to reedifie, who haply have been oblig'd to make use of old walls to such or such purpose, which had been built for some other different purposes. He consequently is of opinion, that he should more fortunately advance into Philosophy, if *he should first raze out of his Creed all those opinions which he had received in the* Schools, *then if he should build on those old foundations. That being a private person, his design is not to reform the body of the Sciences, nor to offer any violence to the Method established in the Schools of the delivery and tradition of them, but only to reform his own thoughts.* That in enquiring after a fit method for the advancement of his design, he hath found out that *as to Logick, and the most part of its instructions, he knew no other use of them, then that they served only to explicate to another those things which one knows,*

or

or rather to discourse without judgment of those things whereof we are ignorant, then to attain the knowledg of any thing not known before. And though it contain a many most true and most necessary instructions, yet *there were so many other things intermingled which were hurtful or superfluous, that it was as difficult a matter to distinguish the one from the other, as to draw a* Diana *or* Mercury *out of an unhewen stone.* So that in stead of the great and infinite number of *Logical* precepts, he contented himself with these four following.

1. *Never to admit any thing for true, but upon evident discovery that it were so indeed.*

2. *To divide each of the difficulties that occurr'd, into as many parcels as could be, and as was requisite, the better to resolve them.*

3. *To begin with the most simple objects, and the most easie to be known, and so to proceed by little and little to the knowledge of such as were most opposite.*

4. *To*

4. *To make such exact and perfect calculations, as to be assured to have omitted nothing.*

It must indeed be acknowledged, that this design is high and noble; and it is extremely to be wished, that one particular man had at first laid the foundations of Philosophy, and consequently built it up to its perfection. Nor can I but with the Author heartily wish, that some one man would undertake the *reformation* of Philosophy, whereof he having conceiv'd so noble and heroick a design, I wish him so much life, and that vigor of body and mind, as that he may see it accomplished. But in case he leave his work imperfect, can he expect any better handling from those that shall come after him, then he hath afforded those that have gone before him? Is it not probable that some eminent wit, like his own, may even in his edifice find somewhat which his understanding should not admit for good contrivance, and consequently would not oblige himself

ſelf to his deſignations, but after his example would build upon new foundations.

But whereas he ſays, that being a *private perſon*, he doth not undertake the reformation of the Sciences, nor intends to invert the eſtabliſhed Method of the Schools for the diſpenſation of them; he ſhould have remembred, that not only thoſe who actually embroil a State into ſeditions and diſorders are guilty of treaſon, but alſo thoſe who by libellous writings calumniate the preſent government thereof. If therfore there be reaſon to blame any particular man that ſhould undertake raſhly to reform the Schools, he ſurely cannot be altogether exempt from cenſure, who ſhall, *Medea*-like, cut in peeces the Philoſophy commonly and univerſally received in the Schools, and not propoſe any means to recompoſe it.

But to come to an examination of the particular charge he hath againſt *Logick*, we muſt in every Art or Science

ence distinguish the truth and certainty of its precepts from the use of them. He doth not condemn any of its precepts of falshood, nor indeed could have done with reason, but he censures the most part as superfluous and hurtful. If he had contented himself to have said that there were many superfluous, I should not have had much to say to the contrary; for I acknowledg that *Aristotle* had sometimes reason to compare *Logick* to a feast of Crabs, where there is much shell, and little meat, but that little is both delicate and wholsom. But if this be admitted of *Logick*; all other Arts and Sciences will fall under the same lash. Those hardy dashes and circumvolutions, and the cadences of the Pen, wherewith Writing-masters do incircle the Copies they give to their Scholars, are of little or no use at all; and I have heard say, that those who learn Academical Horsmanship are taught many tricks, which haply they will never have occasion to make use of in a battel; yet

both

both theſe have their ſeveral, though it may be inſenſible helps and advantages. By the ſame reaſon may Nature it ſelf be taxed with ſuperfluity, becauſe men muſt ſow, thraſh, winnow and grind the grain before it can be made into bread for their nouriſhment. And after all this, neither the bread nor any thing elſe we eat is ſo clearly converted into nouriſhment, but that there muſt be ſome excrement. This doctrine ſhould alſo reduce the houſes of great men to a wonderful ſimplicity, if they ſhould be indulged nothing which were ſuperfluous, and were not of preſent uſe, nor ſhould admit of more diſhes of meat on their tables then were neceſſary for the pure ſatisfaction of thoſe they have to entertain.

But above all, I am ſomewhat amazed that the Author ſhould ſay, that the *Syllogiſms* and other inſtructions of *Logick* ſhould ſerve us to no other purpoſe then to diſcourſe without judgment of thoſe things whereof

we

we are ignorant. Certainly he cannot forget that Logick gives us this precept, *That we ſhould not admit as principles of a ratiocination, any Propoſitions which were not true, or at leaſt probable.* Now I cannot believe, that to diſcourſe probably of a thing, is the ſame thing as to ſpeak of it without judgment. If therefore one that hath read Logick, diſcourſe without judgment of a thing whereof he is ignorant, the fault is not to be imputed to Logick, but to the Logician; and 'tis the ſame caſe as when a muſty cask ſpoils good wine.

Moreover, how can he deny but that the *Syllogiſms* aſſiſt us in what we are to learn, and not only enable us to teach others what we already know? Can we attain the Sciences without Reaſoning, or can we reaſon without Syllogiſms? Thoſe demonſtrations of *Geometry*, by the means and aid whereof he hath learn'd ſo much, are they not Syllogiſms? But he will ſay, Nature hath taught us to reaſon:

But it doth not thence follow, that the Precepts which Nature hath furnished us with for the direction and conduct of our reasoning, are superfluous and unprofitable. By this kind of reasoning, he shews us by his own example that we do not reason well. And therefore are we so much the more obliged to those wise men and Philosophers, who reflecting both on their own and other mens reasonings, have observed the faults which might happen in them, and have left us instructions to shun them.

In the last place, it seems to me very strange, that he should say that Syllogisms should assist us rather in explicating to another what one knows; then to learn what one knows not; for to explicate to another what one knows, is nothing else but to suppose it to another in such a manner as that he may learn it. But it being granted, that Syllogisms stand us in no stead but to explicate that to another which we know, it follows they are

helpful

helpful to him that doth learn of us: But it may be rather ſaid, that as the ſame light ſerves me to ſhew ſomthing to another which I ſee my ſelf, and ſerves him to perceive that which I ſhew him, ſo may it be ſaid of Syllogiſms.

But can we believe he is ſerious with us, when he would only oblige us to four Precepts of *Logick*, ſeeming to eſteem the reſt as worth nothing; ſince it will appear that theſe four precepts cannot be put in practice, but only by ſuch as have learned for the moſt part all the other which *Ariſtotle* and his Interpreters have delivered? I may with as much reaſon ſay, that for a man to approve himſelf to be a good and able *Phyſitian*, he ſhall need obſerve but theſe three precepts; To expel diſeaſes, abate the violence of their ſymptoms, and never undertake the cure of any incurable diſeaſe. But now to put theſe precepts in practice, it muſt firſt be enquired what are the cauſes of every diſeaſe whereto man is

ſubject, as alſo what their ſymptoms are, by what remedies they are to be overcome, and by what means it may be known whether the Patient be deſperate or no, which I take it is a buſineſs of longer breath. It is certain there is nothing ſo unworthy a Philoſopher, as to be too credulous; and therefore *Epicharmus*, with much reaſon, ſaid, *Nervos atque arcus ſapientiæ eſſe, nihil temerè credere.* Now there are two ſorts of Propoſitions, whereof a man may arrive to a clear and diſtinct knowledge. Some are clear and evident in themſelves, as being the firſt; others have need of proof: As it is in bodies, ſome are perceiv'd by that light which they have in themſelves, as the Sun and the Fire; others, that they may be ſeen, have need of ſome exterior light, and ſuch are all colour'd and illuminous bodies. The firſt Propoſitions, as they are but few in number in every Science, ſo they cauſe us no great trouble, but are acknowledged by all thoſe that are ariv'd

riv'd at diſcretion; in which ſtate being propoſed to us by our maſters, and we underſtanding only the ſenſe of them, and conſidering it attentively, they force us to acknowledg them for true. The number of the Propoſitions of the other kind is infinite; and though they depend of the firſt by certain concatenations which are moſt ſtrong, nay, ſuch as are impoſſible to be broken, yet the links of that chain whereby they are ty'd together, are in a manner imperceptible, unleſs it be to thoſe who are very clear-ſighted; and the reaſonings whereby we diſcover them are called *Demonſtrations*. Whence it may be inferred, that that which makes the greateſt difficulty in the Sciences, is to find out the demonſtrations of this ſort of Propoſitions, and to proceed methodically in the ſearch of them: Whence it is to be inferr'd, that it muſt be known what Demonſtration is, and how many ſorts there are of it, and what are the qualities and conditions of their Principles. And this is

it that *Aristotle* teaches us in his *Analyt. posterior.*

For what concerns the *Division* he speaks of; it is certainly a thing very necessary, to divide the matters which we would treat of into many words, that so we the more easily come to a clear understanding of what we are to enquire into. As we find there is a necessity of cutting our meat before we put it into our mouths, and besides of chewing it with our teeth, so to ease our stomachs, which otherwise would have the harder task to digest it. But it is a hard matter to divide well; and for that reason *Plato* in his *Phædr.* said, that if he met with one that could divide well, he would follow his steps as those of some God; μετόπιθε κατ' ἴχνιον, ὥστε θεοῖς. The search of truth would therefore be so much the harder to one that hath not learn'd the art to divide; for a thing must be divided into as many words as it may possibly, and the denumeration of the parts must be perfect. Otherwise it will be

all

all one, as if at a table where there were much Fowl, they ſhould intreat one to carve, who ſhould underſtand ſo little in carving, as that by reaſon of his ignorance of the joynts, he ſhould endeavour to cut athwart the bones.

To the third Part.

THe third part of the Authors diſcourſe contains nothing but that Platform of *Moral Philoſophy* which he hath framed to himſelf: which I do not pretend to examine, ſeeing he profeſſes that he hath not ſet it forth but with a proviſo; for haply when he comes to his ſecond or after-thoughts, or to the definitive ſentence whether they ſhall ſtand or no, he will raſe it down, not leaving one ſtone upon another, and afterwards build up another anew. And that this is not improbable, may be preſumed out of his own words. For, ſayes he, *I ſhould have thought my ſelf guilty of a great fault*

againſt right underſtanding, if becauſe then I approved any thing, I were alſo afterwards obliged to take it for good, when perhaps it ceaſed to be ſo, or that I had ceaſed to eſteem it ſo.

To the fourth Part.

IN the fourth Part of this Diſcourſe he entertains us with the firſt fruits of his *Metaphyſical* meditations: And to the end we might be our own Judges, whether the foundations he hath laid be not ſtrong enough, he diſcovers even the corner-ſtone of it. He ſayes therefore, that *he could not ſafely build any thing upon the teſtimony of the Senſes.* But becauſe they ſometimes deceive us, he ſuppoſes they deceive us always; and becauſe there are ſome men who miſtake themſelves in reaſoning, that therefore *he was obliged to reject all thoſe reaſons as falſe, which he had before received as demonſtrations.* And laſtly, *becauſe that the ſame*

ſame thoughts which we have waking may happen to us ſleeping, and yet not any of them be true, he reſolved to imagine that all thoſe things which ever entred into his mind, were no more true then the illuſions of his dreams. But a while after, reflecting on the judgment he had made that every thing is falſe, he obſerved that this truth, *I think*, therefore *I am, was ſo firm and immoveable, that he might lay it down for the firſt Principle of his Philoſophy.* And this is the ſummary of the firſt part of this Part of his Diſcourſe.

According then to the Authors judgment, *To appeal from the teſtimony of the ſenſes, is to quit the quick-ſands and the quag-mire, and to come to the rock and ſolid ground.* But I cannot but ſay with *Lucretius*, that this is rather *violare fidem primam, & convellere tota fundamenta, quibus nitatur vita ſaluſque.* The teſtimony of the *Senſes* is the true and natural foundation of all *Philoſophy*, and that in two manner of wayes.

Firſt,

First, the Senses judge of all objects which are presented to them, and their *judgments* are registred among the *records* of *Memory*, where *Reason* makes a review of them, (which the Schools call *Induction*) by the way of universal propositions. Just as if there were no written Law in *France*, and that a Law-maker should turn over the Parlament-Rolls, and from the Acts and Ordinances which had been enacted at several times and upon several occasions, should extract certain laws, which being conformable to the common practice of the *Courts* of *Justice*, wou'd not cause any trouble to the State in general, nor incommodate any particulars in the possession of their respective rights and priviledges.

Secondly, The effects of all natural things being for the most part sensible, and the senses having taken cognisance of them, the Reason, without controlling the judgments made by the senses, betets it self to the search of their causes. For the proof of this assertion, we will

will content our ſelves with what the force of truth hath wreſted from the Author himſelf; who having forgot-en his Hypotheſis of the uncertainty of the judgment of the Senſes, is ſtrangely ſurpris'd: For in the laſt part of this Diſcourſe he ſpeaks of nothing ſo much as of thoſe *experiences* which are neceſſary for the perfection of Philoſophy, and profeſſes *that he hath need of an infinite number more then he hath, which he could not compaſs without the aſſiſtance of ſome other.* And elſwhere, he invites all thoſe who profeſs any tenderneſs or affection to Vertue, *to communicate unto him thoſe which they have made.* Now I humbly conceive theſe *experiences* are not reaſonings, but ſenſitive obſervations. How came he to know that the heart hath motion within it ſelf, if not by the ſenſes? And to what purpoſe doth he take ſo much pains to teach us to make ſpectacles for to aſſiſt us in the contemplation of the ſtars, if after all our ſtargazing we may not give any credit to

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our ſenſes? To what hath been ſaid, I dare preſume to add thus much; That to reject altogether the teſtimony of the Senſes, is to be ungrateſull and injurious to God and nature who have beſtowed them on us, certainly out of a deſign and knowledge that they were neceſſary, and that we ſhould find employment for them. For every ſenſe hath its proper and peculiar object, whereof it is the ſole and abſolute Iudge without appeal. As for inſtance, it is only the Sight that can judge of colours, and reaſon in that judgment concurs not nor contributes any thing at all. In like manner, the Hearing only diſtinguiſhes the divers tones and accents of the voice, and the greateſt wit in the world could never doe it by ever ſo many reaſonings.

But, ſayes he, *the Senſes deceive us ſometimes*; and to ſtrengthen his Argument I will adde, That whoſoever is once convinc'd of having borne falſe witneſs, may never again be admitted

admitted to bear any. To which it is eaſie to anſwer. For if they deceive us ſometimes, they afterwards undeceive us again, and ſuffer us not to continue long in our error. They are not like the falſe witneſſes who wittingly and willingly ſpeak againſt their conſciences, but would always render a true teſtimony if they could, and they always can do it, when the queſtion is of their proper objects; for all that wherein one of our ſenſes is deceived, is not its particular object.

For there are ſome objects which are common to divers ſenſes, as Quantity, Figure, Motion and Reſt, Unity, Multitude, Continuity or Diſcontinuity. There are moreover ſome things which conſidered in themſelves cannot move the Senſes, which yet are ſenſible, by how much as they have a relation to thoſe things, which of themſelves and according to their proper nature operate on the Senſes.

I say therefore, that those things which operate not by election, but by that invincible inclination which they receive from Nature, and as they express it in the Schools, *ex necessitate naturæ*, do always operate as strongly as they can, and they are by Nature provided of those forces which shall be sufficient to make them attain the end whereto they aspire in operating. But it is most evident that our Senses do not operate by election or choice, but by that invincible inclination which Nature hath bestowed on them; and consequently Nature having assigned to each of them its proper and peculiar object, whereof it should be alone able to discern, it is impossible but that they should judge thereof, if there happen not some hinderance or impediment in their operations.

Those hindrances are either internal or external: Internal I call the defaults and indispositions of the Organs; the external can consist but in two things; the one, when the object is at too great

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a diſtance, and that the organ which it ſhould ſmite is out of its juſt reach, and that the object is not repreſented but as it were tranſiently, ſo that the ſenſe hath not the leiſure to diſcern it. The other is, when the ſpace between the ſenſe and the object is not well diſpoſed; as when we look through a coloured glaſs, or when the air is not clear enough. Whence it may be inferr'd, that it is impoſsible that our ſenſes ſhould deceive us in the diſcernment of their proper and particular objects, if their organs are well diſpoſed, and that the objects are well and duly repreſented unto them, and laſtly when the ſpace is in the requiſite condition. If therefore the eye when it is hurt doth not perfectly diſcern the colours, we muſt expect the judgment it ſhall make of them when it is well. If it cannot diſtinctly diſcern them by the light of a candle, or in the twilight, we muſt ſuſpend our cenſure till we ſee how it will judge of them when it hath full day-light. And if it be not able to

diſcern

discern the objects when they are at too far a distance, we must endeavour to bring them nearer to it. When therefore the sense is to judge of its proper object, it is the charge of the intellectual faculty to judge whether there want not any of the requisite conditions; and if any of them be awanting, it ought to suspend its satisfaction until there be a concurrence of them altogether. The understanding therefore never pretends to any jurisdiction over the senses, unless it be that it enjoins them to repeat their judgments about their proper objects, which hinders not at all but that they are always the soveraign Iudges thereof: As when the King enjoins the Parlament to take a review of any business which before had past their votes, he doth not by that action take away from it the quality of a soveraign Court.

Whereas he says, that because those things which we imagine being asleep are false, we can have no assurance but that

that thoſe thoughts which we have when we are awake are alſo to be rejected as equally falſe, we ſhall examine it more fully anon.

For the preſent we ſhall take into conſideration, how the chief corner-ſtone of this Philoſophy is laid. He ſays, that he hath at laſt obſerved this truth, *I think*, therefore *I am*, to be ſo firm, that it only deſerved to be receiv'd for the firſt principle of his Philoſophy. However I take no great pleaſure to punctiliate and criticize about words, yet I cannot but take notice by the way, that it is not handſomly nor properly ſpoken to call this either a *verity* or *principle*. For there are certain truths which he himſelf formally diſtinguiſhes, making uſe of ſome for the demonſtration of others. Therefore to ſpeak properly, this propoſition, *I think*, is a principle, and *I am*, is a propoſition: *I think*, is the firſt principle; and *I am*, is the concluſion which he thence infers. Yet can I not be aſſured that this pro-

ſition, *I think*, may be made a firſt principle, according to the Author's own doctrine, ſeeing all the force of the conſequence depends on another principle mentioned afterward, that is to ſay, on this univerſal propoſition, That for *to think*, *there is a neceſsity to be.* Methinks an excellent Metaphyſitian, ſuch as is the Author, ſhould not have put it down nakedly for a firſt principle, for the truth of it doth not proceed from its own nature, or from the ſpecifical difference of *thinking*, but generally every action whatſoever preſuppoſes the exiſtence of the Agent. He ſhould therefore, in my judgment, have gone a little higher to the mother-truth (as I may ſo call it) and ſay, that *to act, there is a neceſsity to be.* Juſt as when we would clear the pretenſion of any mans ſucceſſion, we aſcend upwards, and examine whence he derives his right. Moreover the Reader may take notice, that in laying down the propoſition, *I think*, for a firſt principle, he unawares founds

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his Philosophy upon the testimony of the Senses. For notwithstanding that to judge of the truth or falshood of a Proposition, it is necessary to understand well the terms whereof it consists, yet I would withall gladly ask him what he means when he sayes, *I think*; and I am confident that he will not deny, but that the first knowledge which he hath had of the difference between *me* and *thee*, hath proceeded from the *Sense*. Lastly, this way of reasoning, *I think*, therefore *I am*, cannot any way be acknowledg'd for a Demonstration; because this Principle, *I think*, is not more clear and evident, then the conclusion which he draws from it; for as my *existence* hath preceded my *thinking*, so the assurance which I have of my *existence* is upon the credit and testimony of my *Senses*, and that without any assistance of my Reason, and before I had made any reflection at all on my thoughts. But the Author being in this manner assured of his existence,

he undertakes to shew wherein the nature and essence of man consists. *Seeing* says he, *I can fain that I had no body at all, and that there were no world, and that there were no place wherein I was; yet I cannot imagine I should be able* to think, *unless* I were. And thence he would infer, that *his thinking was the only means whereby he was assured of his being*; and from thence, says he, *I learned that MY SELF*, that is to say, *my Soul, whereby I am what I am, was a substance whose essence consists only in* thinking, *and which, as concerning its being, doth not depend of any thing that is material.* Nay, he advances yet farther, where he affirms that *the Soul is more easily known then the Body.*

In this ratiocination methinks there are many things lie very open to censure. First he seems to *Platonise*, and to make the soul of a man to be the man, without alledging any thing for the proof thereof. If that be granted, we cannot call a man a rational crea-

ture, ſince the ſoul cannot be call'd a creature. By the ſame reaſon we may not ſay that a man is mortal, ſeeing the ſoul is immortal. But though ſometimes the ſoul of a man be called the man, yet is it not properly ſpoken, but Synechdochically, which is a manner of ſpeaking whereby we give the name of the whole to ſome part, eſpecially to the more principal part. And it is in this ſenſe that *Ariſtotle* in the 10 book of his Ethicks ſays, that the underſtanding of a man, ὁ νοῦς, is principally the man: τοῦτο, ſayes he, μάλιϛα ἄνθρωπος. And if the Scripture in one place ſayes, *This day ſhalt thou be with me in paradice*, it ſayes in another, that *God formed man of the duſt of the earth*, and that he ſhall return into the earth. For if in the former of theſe paſſages the denomination of man be given to the ſoul, as the more noble part, in the latter the name of man is attributed to the body, though it be the more ignoble part: And it is in this ſenſe that we ſay that

ſuch a one is interr'd, meaning that his body is ſo. But this error were in ſome ſort tolerable in ſome other perſon who ſhould not make ſo ſevere a profeſſion, not to acknowledge any thing upon the account of any mans authority, how great ſoever he may be, as the Author pretends to doe, though *Plato* had obtained that eſteem and opinion of infallibility amongſt the Ancients, that *Cicero* bluſh'd not to ſay, *That he ſhould not be aſham'd to erre with Plato.* But this aſſertion methinks is more ſtrange, That the whole nature or eſſence of the *Soul* conſiſts in *thinking*. If the eſſence of the Soul conſiſted altogether in thinking, it hath thence forward neither exiſtence nor eſſence. Moreover, if thinking, which is the action of the ſoul, be not a thing different from its eſſence, the ſoul muſt be thought to have attained the higheſt degree of ſimplicity, which appertains not but to the higheſt intelligence, and by conſequence we may ſay, that *Anima eſt actus purus.*

But

But granting that it were true that the whole essence of the soul consisted only in *thinking*, yet we may say that the proof which the Author brings for it is weak and insufficient; for from this principle, That thinking is the only thing which assures us of the essence of the soul, it does not follow that the whole essence of the soul is nothing else but thinking, unless it must be also granted that I cannot assure my self of the existence of any thing but by that thing wherein consists its essence; which is a proposition so remote from reason, that I believe the Author will not presume to maintain it. Moreover he lays down for a Principle a Proposition which I cannot by any means grant him, which is, that *thinking* is the only means whereby I can assure my self of the *existence* of my soul. I would gladly know of him whether these reasonings, *I rejoice, I love, I hate, I fear*, therefore *I am*, be not as firm and immoveable as that of his, *I think*, therefore *I am*?

For when *I rejoice*, or when *I love*, I am assur'd that *I think*: And these propositions, for to *rejoice* I must needs *be*, and to *love* I must needs *be*, are as certain as this, *To think* I must needs *be*.

The second part of his doctrine of the essence of the soul, to wit, that *it depends not on the body, nor on any other material thing*, is true; but the reason whereby he pretends to prove it, is not satisfactory. For from that supposition, that I can imagine that my soul is not clothed with any body, there doth not follow any other thing, but that it depends not of the body by any essential and absolutely necessary dependance. For there is another kind of dependance between natural things, which yet God by his omnipotence may dissolve; such is the dependance of my life on the air which I breathe, on the earth which bears me up, as also of the other elements which concur to my composition. Now that which hath puzzled the Philosophers in this busi-

buſineſs, hath not been to know whether the ſoul of a man depends in ſuch a manner on the body, that it is altogether impoſſible that it can ſubſiſt without it; but to prove by demonſtration clearly and evidently, that it can naturally ſubſiſt, and that in effect it doth ſubſiſt after its ſeparation from the body. And here it was that the Author ſhould have ſhewn whether he knew any thing more then others who have entangled themſelves in that queſtion. Nay further, when I ſhould have granted him that the *eſſence* of the ſoul were nothing but *to think*, the controverſie were not thereby decided, becauſe our thoughts ordinarily depend on the body; in as much as we cannot think on any thing, if the imagination, which is faſten'd to the organ of the Body, do not repreſent to the underſtanding the image of ſome material thing, as we ſhall prove anon.

The laſt part of his diſcourſe of the eſſence of the ſoul hath this aſſertion;

That

That *the ſoul is more eaſily known and diſcovered then the body*: A Paradox which he offers not to prove by any reaſon at all. If all what is above ſpoken were granted him, yet could he not from thence draw this concluſion, but the contrary rather, that is, that men have but a very confuſed knowledge of their bodies, even before they have once conſidered whether they have any ſouls or no. And as to the diſtinct and perfect knowledge of the ſoul, I do not think the Author will preſume to boaſt he hath attain'd it.

In the next place he makes it his task to find out and determine that which is requiſite in a Propoſition to make it true and infallible, and gives us this rule, *That thoſe things which we conceive the moſt clearly and moſt diſtinctly are all of them true.* The clear and diſtinct knowledge which we can have of a Propoſition, conſiſts in two points. The firſt is, when we conceive clearly and diſtinctly the parts whereof it is com-

composed. The second, when we clearly perceive their alliance and union, or their antipathy and incompatibility. If the Author speak of the former manner of conceiving, I shall presume to declare his rule utterly false; for we can as well, and as clearly conceive the parts of a Proposition that is false, as those of one that is true. As for example, I have a clear and distinct knowledge of the parts of this Proposition, though it be a false; *Latus & diameter Quadrati sunt commensurabilia.* But if his meaning be of the second manner of conceiving and knowing, his rule signifies no more then this, *viz.* That those Propositions which we conceive clearly and distinctly to be true, are indeed and really true, whereof never any man yet doubted. But it were only to fight with shadows to bestow any further examination on this rule of the Authors, since he himself confesses elsewhere, That *there is great difficulty to discern certainly those Propositions which we conceive most clearly*

clearly and distinctly. For every man that is fully convinced that such a proposition is true, how false soever it may be, will say that he conceives it clearly and distinctly in one of these two manners.

But the Author proceeds, and entertains us with an essay of his Philosophy concerning the nature of God: wherein I must ingenuously confess I have found no more satisfaction then in what he hath delivered of the nature of man. And here he advances this Proposition, making it his business to find out whence he had learned to think anything more perfect then himself; and at last he evidently discovers, that it must have proceeded from some nature that were effectually more perfect then his own, whereof the Idea should be infus'd into him; and in a word, that that Nature can be no other then God, because, saith he, *that I could not entertain within my self the Idea of a Being more perfect then my own, and that that which is more*

more perfect cannot proceed from that which is less perfect. Now from hence in my opinion it should rather have been inferr'd, that the contemplation of things which were less perfect then himself, should have given him occasion to examine whether there were not some nature more perfect then his own. For considering that the Plants are more perfect then inanimate creatures, and among animals Dogs and Horses are more perfect then Shelfish, and Men arrive to a higher degree of perfection then all the other creatures; he might by the consideration of such a dependance have been induced to consider and examine whether there were not yet some other nature more perfect then this rational nature of ours: And to bring him to this, he needed but only have compared himself with the other creatures. For, I conceive myself to *know* some things, and I *doubt* of many others; nay there are an infinite number of things whereof I am utterly ignorant.

Thus

There are others in the world who know leſs then I do, and there are thoſe alſo who know much more; but there is not any man who doubts not of ſomewhat. Now this conſideration I ſhould think ſufficient to excite any rational ſoul to examine whether there were not ſome intelligent nature altogether exempt from all *error, doubt and ignorance*, and that for to advance into ſuch an examination, there ſhould be no need that God ſhould infuſe into me the Idæa of any thing more perfect then my ſelf, nor ſhould I have wanted any more particular aſſiſtance of God in this, no more then in any other ratiocination. For as it is as natural to us to lift up our eyes to heaven to contemplate the ſun and moon, as to look down upon the earth; in the ſame manner, it is as natural for a man to endeavour to find out the moſt perfect nature in the univerſe, as to entertain his mind with things below; juſt as when we ſee a river, it is as natural for us to ſeek out

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the ſource from whence it ſprings, as the place where it diſembogues it ſelf. But it being admitted that the Propoſition were true, yet is the proof of it weak and inſufficient: for though it be true, that *a thing which is more perfect cannot depend of a thing which is leſs perfect*, yet it is not equally true that the Idæa of a nature more perfect then mine may not depend on mine; for the Idæa which I have of a thing which is more perfect then my ſelf, is not more perfect then I. All the Idæa's whereof my mind is ſuſceptible, whenceſoever they proceed, are but accidents and repreſentations, and therefore cannot come into the ballance, as to perfection, with the rational ſoul, which is a ſubſtance. Moreover, if to know God, it be neceſſary that he muſt have infuſed into us ſome Idæa of his nature, I demand whether he have beſtowed that Idæa on all, or only on ſome in particular? If he have beſtow'd it equally on all, how comes it to paſs that ſo many have ſuch extravagant

travagant thoughts of God, and so disproportionable to his nature? If this indulgence of heaven reaches but some in particular, it makes nothing to the present purpose, it being here a question of Philosophy, and not of visions, inspirations, revelations, or any other such lights.

But how then shall we satisfie or convince the Author in this point? Certainly it cannot be, but he well understands the doctrine of the Schools touching the necessity which the Understanding hath of the senses and the imagination, in all things whereof it undertakes the consideration. Or is it that he dissembles it, out of the aversion which he bears to that more then any other Tenet of the Schools; and does as the *French* do, who can never be perswaded that the plot of a Play is well laid, if a *Spaniard* be not introduc'd in some extravagant and ridiculous posture? However it may be, I doubt not to make it appear that he hath not had reason to speak so dis-

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advantageouſly; nay, and what is more, that all the Idæa's which we have of the nature of God, do but too much betray and diſcover the imperfection of the nature whence they proceed; ſo far are we from having any cauſe to affirm that God ſhould infuſe them into us.

Our Saviour cals God *Creator*, *Preſerver*, *Lord*, *Judge*, *Revenger*, *Rewarder*, &c. But all thoſe attributes do not diſcover what he is in himſelf, but only denote him ſuch as he expreſſes himſelf towards us, and conſequently make no repreſentation of his eſſence, ſeeing he may be without us. We call him moſt good, moſt wiſe, almighty, and in like manner attribute to him all the other perfections, which are not in us but imperfectly: but in ſo doing we imploy divers thoughts to repreſent, that all theſe in him are but one; and further to rectifie all theſe Idæa's and notions, we muſt adde, that he is all theſe incomprehenſibly. So that the moſt proper notions we can have of

him are negative, as that he is inviſible, incomprehenſible, infinite, incorruptible: All which give us to underſtand what he is not, but acquaint us not what he is. For as concerning the affirmative notions we have of him, a day will come when we ſhall find how groſs and ruſtick they were, and ſhall do as *Tityrus* in *Virgil*, who when he came to ſee *Rome*, condemned all the Idæa's which he had conceived of it before, ſaying,

Urbem quam dicunt Romam, Melibæe, *putavi*
Stultus ego huic noſtræ ſimilem, &c.

As for the reſt of his ratiocinations concerning God, they ſeem to me good and ſolid: but I muſt withall tell him, he is not the firſt Author of them, but *Scotus* and moſt Authors who have written of Metaphyſicks have made uſe of them. If he have borrowed them of others, he is juſtly cenſureable, ſince he affirms that he found

found nothing that was firm and certain in Philoſophy. If he have been ignorant that any others before him had made uſe of them, he muſt needs acknowledg that he hath been guilty of ſome precipitation in condemning the writings of the Philoſophers without any previous peruſal of them.

In the fifth Section, where he ſpeaks of Geometrical truths, I have not obſerved any thing remarkable; unleſs it be, that in ſpeaking of a Sphere, he hath unawares let ſlip this, *That all the parts are equally diſtant from the centre.*

In the ſixth Section, he ſays that the reaſon why there are ſo many who perſwade themſelves that there is much difficulty to know God and the Soul, is becauſe they are ſo accuſtomed never to conſider any thing but through the imagination, that they conclude that whatſoever is not imaginable, is not intelligible: Which is manifeſt, ſays he, in that the Philoſophers themſelves hold, *That nothing enters into the Underſtanding, which before had not*

paſs'd through the Senſe. Where it is to be obſerved, the Idæa's of God and the Soul have never been admitted. To which he adds. That thoſe who would make uſe of their imagination to comprehend them, are of the ſame opinion.

Although it be on all ſides confeſs'd that the ſoul of man is immortal, yet in regard it is, in ſuch a manner as it is, joyned to the body, the ſoveraign faculty thereof, which we call the intellect or the underſtanding, cannot, in its operations, be without ſome dependance on the ſenſes & the imagination. And that is it which hath given occaſion to the Philoſophers to ſay, that *there is nothing in the underſtanding, which hath not before been in the ſenſe;* and that the underſtanding doth not know nor comprehend any thing without the aſſiſtance of the imagination. As concerning the former of theſe Maxims, I could wiſh that thoſe whoſe authority firſt brought it into reputation, had bethought themſelves of

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ſome other manner of expreſſion, and that they had contented themſelv s to have ſaid with *Ariſtotle*, that he which had no ſenſe could never comprehend any thing. But the interpretation which they give of it is indubitably true. Now in my judgment there is nothing leſs becoming a Philoſopher, then to be too nice and critical about words, when it is fully agreed about the things themſelves. The authors therefore of this Maxim, *That there is nothing in the underſtanding, &c.* did not mean thereby, that there is nothing intelligible but what is ſenſible, but hold forth two things for us to obſerve. The firſt is; that the underſtanding cannot think of any thing, unleſs ſomewhat have before ſmitten the ſenſes; and conſequently, that the firſt thoughts of the underſtanding have for their object ſomething that is ſenſible. For the underſtanding, before it have conceived any thing, being of it ſelf indifferent as to all ſorts of objects, it cannot be determined to one

object rather then to another, but by the mediation of the ſenſes.

The ſecond thing is, that the notions which we have of ſenſible things do produce in us others, being as it were the ſeed which is caſt into the ground, nay leads us to the knowledg of immaterial things which are not under the reach of our ſenſes. And ſo by conſequence, all the Notions and Idæa's which the Underſtanding can have of the nature of God and the ſoul, and all other things which fall not under our ſenſes, have had their conception of theſe former, after the ſame manner as the Concluſions are ſaid to be in their principles, or a great tree with its fruit and its leaves may be ſaid to be contained in a kernel. Now the underſtanding multiplies its firſt diſcoveries two manner of ways, that is to ſay, by Abſtraction, as when from the notion of Individuals, which are material and ſenſible, it advances to the occult cauſes of things; and when in Geometry, from a ſmall number of prin-

principles it draws ſo many admirable concluſions.

As concerning the ſecond Maxim, it is capable of two interpretations. The firſt is, that nothing is intelligible but what is imaginable; or, that the underſtanding cannot conceive any thing, whereof the imagination doth not furniſh it with a repreſentation. The ſecond is, that ſo often and whenſoever the underſtanding is buſied about any thing, the imagination alſo acts its part by preſenting it with the image of the ſame thing or ſome other. And this ſenſe, and not the other, is held by the Schools of this opinion. Now this ſenſe may yet be divided into two; the firſt is, that the imaginative faculty always accompanies the Underſtanding, as a Dog follows his Maſter every where, though he be not every foot called to that duty, nay ſometimes whether the Maſter will or no, ſo far is it from that there ſhould be a neceſſity. And that is it which *Philoponus* ſayes; ὅτε περὶ τὰ θεῖα

ἐνεργεῖ ὁ νοῦς παρατρέχει ἡ φαντασία ἐθισθεῖσα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις. The other is, that the underſtanding cannot comprehend any thing without the aſſiſtance of the imagination. Now here we are to make a difference between the ſtate of the Underſtanding while it is as it were in its apprentiſhip, and its ſtate of perfection: For the Peripateticks hold, that to the learning of any thing, the Underſtanding ſtands in need of the Imagination. But ſome of them have been of opinion, that the Underſtanding may arrive to ſuch a degree of perfection, that it may diſpence with this aſſiſtance of the Imagination. Like as the ſcaffolds are neceſſary, while the walls of an edifice are a raiſing; but thoſe being once perfected, there is not any further need of them, nay they hinder the outward appearance of the walls: Or as young ſwimmers make uſe of bladders for ſome while, whereof they afterwards ſlight the aſſiſtance.

By this time it may be eaſily diſcovered

vered whether the Author have dealt juſtly with the Schoolmen in this particular. For if there are ſome people who underſtand not any elevation of their ſpirits above ſenſible things, and who believe that that wch is not imaginable, is conſequently not intelligible; the Schools reprove them as much as may be; and the manner how it is underſtood, that whatſoever enters into the underſtanding, hath before been in the ſenſes, cannot be any more civilly called into doubt. As to the objection which he propoſes in the laſt place, where he ſays, that *to make uſe of our imagination to comprehend immaterial things, were as if to hear ſounds we ſhould make uſe of our eyes*, is, without any great difficulty avoided: for who doth not ſee the diſparity that is between theſe things? Of the outward ſenſes, ſome have not been made to exerciſe the functions of the others, and their proper and peculiar objects are different; ſo that what is diſcerned by any one, falls not under the diſcern-

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ment of another. But the imagination hath been beſtow'd on man for the ſervice of the Underſtanding; and though the imagination cannot advance to whatever is intelligible, yet the underſtanding judges of whatever is imaginable. Now this propoſition, That *the imagination aſsiſts us in the comprehenſion of immaterial things*, may be interpreted two manner of ways; whereof the one is true, the other falſe. For, to ſee my ſelf, I make uſe of my eyes, not of a looking-glaſs, yet I ſee my ſelf in the glaſs, and without it I cannot behold my ſelf. In like manner, for to comprehend immaterial things, I make uſe of my underſtanding and of my imagination too, but in divers manners; for 'tis by the help of my underſtanding that comprehend them, and not by the imagination: but my underſtanding would not be able to comprehend them without the aſſiſtance of my imagination, nay ſtands me in no ſtead, if the imagination ſhould not repreſent to the underſtanding

ſtanding the Idæa's of material things. For when I caſt my eys on the Picture of the King of *Sweden*, which repreſents to me no more then the lineaments of his face, my mind goes beyond that, and entertains it ſelf with his generous and heroick actions. I ſee no more in a book but *figures*, *letters* and *characters*; but my mind contents not it ſelf with that, but is carried to the conſideration of the words and things which thoſe letters are deſigned to ſignifie. In like manner, when I read the fables of *Æſop*, I do not acquieſce in the literal ſenſe, as children uſe to do, but I thence make moral inferences. Why therefore ſhould we ſay that the repreſentation of a material thing preſented to the underſtanding by the imagination, may not be helpful to it, to make it underſtand an immaterial thing? From what hath been ſaid it may be eaſily gathered what is the true and natural cauſe why immaterial things are not ſo eaſily known as material. For, the underſtanding not being

being able to comprehend any thing without the imagination, and the representations wherewith it constantly furnishes the understanding being but the images of material things, it follows that it is more easie to comprehend material things then immaterial: just as when one proposes a riddle, the explication is difficult, but the literal sense is easily understood.

In the seventh Section he continues to discredit the testimony of our senses, and calls the assurance they give us of the existence of our bodies, a *moral* assurance. A moral assurance is that which is grounded upon moral reasons, or such as a man must content himself withal in moral matters, although those reasons are not receivable in *Physick*. Now I think I may say, without incurring the censure of an unreasonable man, That the testimony of our senses, when our reason doth not any ways contradict it, is more satisfactory then a hundred moral reasons, and is receivable in Physick; nay, which is more,

more, is the foundation thereof, as we have ſhewed before. As for example, I am obliged to believe what a many perſons of credit (who have no deſign to ſurpriſe or deceive me) do unanimouſly affirm they have ſeen; this is to me a moral aſſurance that ſuch a thing is true; but I ſhould be more indubitably aſſured, if I had ſeen the ſame thing with my own eyes. In like manner, becauſe I have not known nor heard of any diſhoneſt actions in ſuch a man whom I have long converſed with, I have a moral aſſurance that he is an honeſt man: but the aſſurance that I have that he is crooked-nos'd, or that he is of a red complexion, is without compariſon greater, and cannot well be called moral. But, ſays the Author, *the ſenſes do not give us a metaphyſical aſſurance of things.* Now there is a threefold aſſurance. The *moral* aſſurance is the leaſt conſiderable in things, and that is when we cannot contradict a thing without ſome injury done to good manners, although

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we know well enough that it is poſſible the thing may be otherwiſe. The greateſt is that which the Author cals *metaphyſical*, which alſo may be called *mathematical*. There is yet another which we may call *phyſical*, and that is, when we know that a thing muſt abſolutely be ſo or ſo, becauſe it is impoſſible it ſhould be otherwiſe then we affirm it to be, that is to ſay, when we know that according to the courſe of nature, and without the intervention of a miracle, the thing cannot be otherwiſe. As I am aſſur'd, if I put my hand into the fire, and continue it there ſome while, it will be burned: And that the Sun never goes backward, nor ever ſtands ſtill.

But to proceed, after he had thus invalidated the teſtimony of our ſenſes, and made the aſſurance which we have of what they dictate to us very weak and uncertain, he hath obſerved that a man *may imagine being aſleep, that he hath another manner of body, and that he ſees other kinds of ſtars, though there be*

be no ſuch thing. And in conſequence of this he aſſerts, That the greateſt wits that ever have been in the world could not give any rational account whence men came to know, that *the thoughts which we are entertain'd with being aſleep, are more falſe then our others, ſeeing that oftentimes they are as lively and expreſs'd as the others,* unleſs it be in preſuppoſing the exiſtence of God. But we ſee what he means by this queſtion, namely, that the ſolution of it ſhould depend upon this rule, *viz.* That *thoſe things which we moſt clearly and diſtinctly know, are all true.* Which Rule yet he confeſſes is not infallible out of any reaſon; but becauſe that thoſe idæa's and notions, inaſmuch as they are clear and diſtinct, proceed from God, who is all wiſdom and all perfection; and when there remains in them ſomewhat of obſcurity or confuſion, they proceed from us, becauſe we are not arrived to ſuch a degree of perfection: And ſo conſequently, by how much they are more clear,

clear, by ſo much are they the more true: and if there be any falſhood, it muſt be onely ſaid of thoſe notions which have ſomwhat of obſcurity or confuſion. Having therefore thus proved the Rule, he anſwers the Queſtion in this manner. *Whether we ſleep, or whether we wake, we ought not to ſuffer our ſelves to be perſwaded to any thing but by the evidence of our own Reaſon, and not of our imagination or our ſenſes.*

'And becauſe our ratiocinations are not 'alwayes ſo evident and perfect while 'we ſleep as they are while we wake, '(although ſomtimes our imaginations 'may be equally, if not more lively 'and effective) if there be any thing 'of Truth to be expected in our 'thoughts, it muſt be found in thoſe 'which we have when we are waking, 'rather then in our dreams.

In the firſt place, the Author muſt pardon me if I deny him this conſequence, viz. *That becauſe the imaginations which we have when we ſleep are falſe, therefore we may not be fully aſ-*

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assured of what our senses dictate to us when we are awake. For I shall presently take occasion to shew that there is no proportion or similitude between these two things.

Secondly, it is true, and well advised, that we should not suffer our selves to be perswaded by our imagination, if it be not it self conformable to Reason, or the testimony of our Senses. But seeing all that is in us proceeds from God, our imaginations as well as our thoughts; if the thoughts of our understanding are true so far as they are clear and distinct, wherefore is it that our imaginations may not by the same reason be all true, when they are lively, affective and distinct?

Thirdly, where he sayes, That *our ratiocinations are never so clear and perfect while we are sleeping, as when we are waking*; he speaks too generally, for it happens sometimes that in our sleep we make most excellent ratiocinations.

Lastly, I conceive it is not enough

to ſay, that in the time of our ſleep our ratiocinations arrive not to that evidence and perfection which they may come to when we are awake; but the reaſon thereof ſhould have been aſſigned. For it may ſeem that in the time of ſleep the rational ſoul hath a greater and freer enjoyment of her ſelf, and, as being ſo much the leſs diverted by exterior objects, ſhe ought the better to acquit herſelf of her nobleſt function.

But to treat this matter a little more tenderly, and to penetrate to the bottom, here are three Queſtions ſo linked together, that he that anſwers one of them, anſwers all.

1. Why the imaginations which we have when we are aſleep, are falſe rather then thoſe we have awake?

2. Why our imaginations, whether we ſleep or wake, are more likely to be falſe then the judgment of our ſenſes?

3. Why our ratiocinations are neither ſo evident nor ſo perfect in the time of our ſleep, as in the time of our waking?

I ſhall endeavour to anſwer theſe queſtions upon other Hypotheſes then thoſe of the Author, that is, without medling with the exiſtence of God, nor with his nature; ſubmitting my ſelf to the Learned, who may judge whether I have hit the mark or no.

I ſay then, that our imaginations are rather falſe when we ſleep, then when we wake: becauſe in the time of ſleep, our imagination ſtrays up and down without any thing to guide or conduct it. But when we are awake, our Senſes and our Reaſon hinder it from being extravagant, and either keep it from wandring, or reduce it when it hath. For we have imaginations of two ſorts: ſome are voluntary, others have no dependance at all on our will, but on ſome other natural cauſes, which are yet naturally in our power. Which cauſes may be reduced principally to three kinds, and they are

1. The objects which ſmite our ſenſes

2. The passions of our souls, and
3. Certain dispositions of our bodies.

The voluntary imaginations are very frequent to us when we are awake: as when an Architect imagines within himself the Idæa of an edifice for to imitate it, or when a Painter imagines some chimæra or other fiction to make a picture of pleasure, or when we apply our imaginative faculty to some wholsom idæa's, such as may assist us in the understanding of any thing, whereof we have proposed to our selves the contemplation But in our sleep, we have no voluntary imaginations; for though some of our dreams please us, and others displease us and afflict us, we can neither invite the one, nor avoid the other. As concerning the imaginations which are not in our power, according to the natural order of things, in the time of our waking, they are but attendants and dependants on our senses. But sometimes the idæa's of certain things which are absent,

ſent, that have rais'd ſtrong paſſions in our minds, caſt themſelves in the way, and do in ſuch a manner poſſeſs and divert the imaginative faculty, that we perceive not what is before our eyes, nor hear the ſounds which ſmite our ears. And in that poſture, our imaginations, though we are awake, are in a manner dreams. In the ſame manner, the indiſpoſitions of our bodies do work in us ſometimes very ſtrange imaginations, as it daily appears in Phrenetick perſons, and ſuch as are hypocondriacal. Now theſe diſorders and irregularities happening while we wake, fall not out very often, nor to all perſons. But while we ſleep, all our imaginations are nothing elſe but illuſions, as when falſe idæa's are repreſented to the imaginative faculty, that is to ſay, the idæa's of things that are not, or in another manner then they are, or ſome other circumſtances: As if a man that is in love ſhould in his ſleep imagine that he ſaw his Miſtreſs, ſuch as ſhe is indeed, but with this

falſe circumſtance, that ſhe lay cloſe by him, there being no ſuch thing. In like manner, when in ſleeping we imagine and dream of ſomewhat that was paſt the day before, or ſomewhat that ſhall happen the day after, 'tis but an illuſion, becauſe we do not imagine the thing as paſt, but as if it were preſent, and in effect before our ſenſes.

As to the ſecond Queſtion, I ſay that our imaginations are more likely to deceive us then our ſenſes, becauſe that thoſe things which ſmite our ſenſes muſt be truly real and exiſt; but they are but things in picture, as it were, which ſmite our imaginative faculty, when it operates alone and without the ſenſes; for external things cannot move the imaginative faculty but by the interpoſition of the ſenſes. From hence it may be inferr'd, That when the Senſes are at reſt, the imagination muſt neceſſarily be at reſt too, or it muſt contemplate thoſe images which had at other times been repreſented to it by the ſenſes, thoſe images having

having remain'd imprinted in the memory, though perhaps the things themſelves which they repreſent have ceas'd to be, or at leaſt are abſent or far diſtant from the ſenſe. There is further this difference between the imaginative faculty and the ſenſes, that the ſenſes cannot change any thing in their object, nor in their operation. But when we are awake, and that we would beſet our ſelves to contemplation, the imagination diſpoſes and diſciplines the images as we will our ſelves; but when we are aſleep, they are alwayes repreſented in the ſame manner, and in the ſame order as they had paſs'd by the ſenſes; but moſt commonly without order, inconſequently, and many times making monſtrous and ridiculous figures, as when the image of a Goat is repreſented with the head of a Lion. It is evident therefore, that however our imaginations may be lively and affective, we never ought to ſuffer our ſelves to be perſwaded by them, but in as much

as they keep harmony with our ſenſes and with our reaſon; and if they do ſo, it is not a perſwaſion of our imaginations, but of our ſenſes and our reaſon. Nor doth it avail any thing againſt us, to ſay, That the imaginative faculty is of greater excellence then the ſenſes; for its excellence doth not conſiſt in the truth of what it repreſents, but in the perfection of the Repreſentation; as it is the excellence of a Painter, not to repreſent any thing in a picture but what is truly and really ſo, but to repreſent any thing to the life that he hath a mind to repreſent. In like manner hath Nature beſtow'd the imaginative faculty on man, not for to diſcern what is, or what is not, nor to judge of what is poſſible or impoſſible, but to be ſerviceable and ſubject to the Underſtanding upon the default of the Senſes, which is when it repreſents unto it the images of things paſt or abſent, or abſtracted from our ſenſes.

From what h..th been ſaid it is eaſie

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to anſwer the third Queſtion. For it being once granted, that the Underſtanding cannot work without the aid and aſſiſtance of the Imagination; and that all the imaginations which we have when we are aſleep, are falſe either in their ſubſtance, or at leaſt in ſome circumſtance, they are not ſo fit to be the foundations of good ratiocinations, the ſubſequent imaginations having no alliance, nor holding correſpondence with the precedent, hinder the underſtanding to finiſh its work, and before it hath ended one, cauſe it to begin another.

All that now lies on my hands to examine, is what the Author treats us with in the eighth Section, where he would prove that we ſhould never ſuffer our ſelves to be perſwaded by the evidence of our ſenſes, no more then of our lively and affective imaginations. *Our ſenſes*, ſayes he, *deceive often enough, though we be not aſleep; as when to thoſe that have the yellow jaundies all things ſeem yellow; and though*

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we ſee the Sun very clearly, we ought not thence to judge that he is no bigger then it ſeems to us.

To ruine the reputation of the Senſes, he ſhould have ſhewn that they are ſometimes deceiv'd in judging of their proper objects, the organs being ſound and in their natural ſtate and condition, the objects being well and duly repreſented unto them, and the ſpace between well diſpos'd, according to theſe three requiſites I mentioned before: But that he doth not ſo much as offer or pretend to do. *Thoſe*, ſays he, *who have the Yellow jaundies ſee all things yellow*; and conſequently the ſight is deceiv'd in diſcerning colours, which are its proper objects. It is indeed a proverb of no ſmall ſtanding, that the Yellow-jaundies cauſeth all things to appear yellow to them that have it; but ordinarily the reaſon of it is, becauſe Melancholy, which cauſes that the Jaundies diffuſing it ſelf through all the skin, nay even through the white of the eyes, doth faſten on the

the horny tunicle. But let it be granted that this common ſaying is always true, I preſume the Author will grant me that the eye is not then in its natural condition. But there is a great deal more to be ſaid. I deny that in the caſe propoſed, the eye is deceiv'd in the diſcerning of colours, for in effect it ſees nothing but what is yellow; it is only deceiv'd in not diſcerning where the yellow is which it ſees. For it is the horny tunicle, which naturally not being of any colour, but is abſolutely diaphanous and dy'd with the Melancholy, that cauſes the objects to ſeem yellow; as when we look through a yellow glaſs, everything ſeems yellow, and if the glaſs be red, all things will appear red. In like manner when a web begins to form it ſelf in the eye, we ſeem to ſee little flies in the air, yet they are nothing but thin and obſcure vapors, or clouds which are raiſed between the horny tunicle and the chryſtalline humor. And if ſometimes we conceive that we ſee ſomethings which

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are not at all, as it happens to frantick persons, it is not the sight which deceives us, but the imagination.

As concerning what he says of the greatness of the Sun and other celestial bodies, what matters it if the sight be deceived therein, seeing the celestial bodies are not at the distance requisite to be seen distinctly. But above all, methinks it is a strange assertion which the Author advances, when he sayes that *the Sun is most clearly seen*: For, his light is so great, that it dazles and so overcomes our sight, that we can see it but very confusedly and imperfectly. Too much light is no less injurious to the sight then too little; and generally the proper objects of every sense being excessive in the highest degree, is insupportable to the organ, and does violence to the temperament, whereby it is what it is.

To conclude, I would gladly ask the Author whether he hath compos'd this *Discourse* awake or asleep? If he have done it asleep, I would entreat him

him to review itbeing awake, becauſe it is not reaſonable that we ſhould ſuffer our ſelves to be perſwaded to credit his dreams. If he have done it awake, how knows he that he was then awake? It is indeed true, that our Reaſon dictates to us that we are awake, when we do effectually *ſee* and *hear*, and have all our *ſenſes* open and attentive to the exterior objects: But that he then *ſaw* and *heard*, and *felt* actually, and not only by imagination, he could not any wayes be aſſured but by the teſtimony of the common Senſe, which judges whether the particular Senſes do their duty or no, as being their centre and mark. If he unravel this skain, he will very much undeceive me,

— *Et erit mihi magnus Apollo.*

FINIS.

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